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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/643,977	08/20/2003	Hiroshi Yabe	XA-9308B	4975
181 7590 12/19/2006 MILES & STOCKBRIDGE PC 1751 PINNACLE DRIVE SUITE 500 MCLEAN, VA 22102-3833			EXAMINER BINDA, GREGORY JOHN	
			ART UNIT 3679	PAPER NUMBER
SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE 3 MONTHS		MAIL DATE 12/19/2006	DELIVERY MODE PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/643,977	YABE ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Greg Binda	3679	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 November 2006.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 11,12 and 16 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 11 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 12 and 16 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 20 August 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/573,941.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Drawings

2. The drawings are objected to because:
 - a. The drawings fail to show rivets disposed in the splines 42 of the holder as recited at claim 11, lines 14 & 15 and claim 12, lines 18-20. Instead, the lead line for reference numeral 42 points to a feature of the holder that lacks rivet holes.
 - b. The drawings fail to show “intervening portion” recited in claim 12, line 19 and “portions” recited in claim 16. Since these portions are the only feature that separates applicants’ invention from the prior art, they must be indicated by reference numeral(s) in the drawings.
3. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as “amended.” If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an

application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

4. The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the "intervening portion" recited in claim 12, line 19 and "portions" recited in claim 16. Since these portions are the only feature that separates applicants' invention from the prior art, they must be described in the detailed description of the invention.

Claim Objections

5. Claim 12 is objected to because in line 4 the word "said" or "the" should be inserted between the words "between" and "two".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ara et al, DE 198 41 456 (Ara) (all citations taken from its U.S. equivalent US 6,223,625 B1). Figs. 1-3 show a damper apparatus comprising: a spring 30; a holder 27, 31 for holding spring 30; a plate 26 having a pawl (radial edge of window 28 (see Fig. 2)) elastically engaged by spring 30; splines 32 on the inner peripheral portion of the plate 26; and splines 35 on the outer peripheral portion of the holder. The holder includes an annular ring 31 disposed between two retaining plates 27.

Fig. 1 shows that the thickness of ring 31 is substantially equal to the thickness of plate 26. Figs 1 & 2 show that a rivet 36 is disposed through a spline 35 of each of said retainer plates 27.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claim 12 is objected to for the reason noted in item 5 above, but would be allowable if corrected. Claim 16 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Allowability is indicated because Ara does not show or suggest the rivet(s) 36 disposed through an intervening portion(s) of the annular ring 31.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments filed November 2, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

- a. Applicant argues that Ara fails to show splines on the inner peripheral portion of the plate. However Fig. 1 of Ara shows splines 32 on the inner peripheral portion of the plate 26.
- b. Applicant argues that Ara fails to show splines on an outer peripheral portion of the holder. However, Fig. 2 of Ara shows splines 35 on the retainer plates 27 of the holder.
- c. Applicant argues that Ara fails to show rivets disposed through the splines of the holder. However, Figs. 1 & 2 show the rivets 36 disposed through the splines 35 of the holder.

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Conclusion

9. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Greg Binda whose telephone number is (571) 272-7077. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:30 am to 7:00 pm with alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel P. Stodola can be reached on (571) 272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Greg Binda
Primary Examiner
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